

## **Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Update — Kim Bogenschutz**

The spring meeting of the AFWA Invasive Species Committee was held on March 14, 2012, during the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Bill McGuire is on contract with AFWA to develop a document analyzing the bioenergy provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill. Bill provided a summary of his preliminary findings which include a growing interest in using known invasive species and potentially invasive species as biomass for bioenergy production. Bill provided a draft of the full report in April for review by several members of both the Invasive Species and Agricultural Conservation Committees.

An intern has been working with AFWA Invasive Species Committee staff to develop a document and database of state invasive species authorities, laws/regulations, staffing levels, partnerships, and funding. Several states are reviewing their draft documents and providing comments so the project can be completed during 2012.

Invasive Species Committee members reviewed a draft of the MOU between the US Department of Interior (DOI) and Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council to establish a general framework for cooperation and collaboration between the DOI, states, industry, and other nongovernmental parties to integrate regulatory and nonregulatory approaches to reduce the risks of invasive, nonnative species being introduced into the United States. AFWA anticipates being a signatory on the MOU.

When the USFWS indicated that state ANS management plan funding for FY2012 may be cut or obligated to zebra/quagga mussel management, AFWA Invasive Species Committee staff queried state ANS coordinators about the potential impacts to their programs. The states were very appreciative of the opportunity to provide information and expressed grave concerns about the possibility of reduction or specific directed application of state management plan funds. While the annual allocation amount may represent a small portion of some states' invasive species management budgets, they are frequently leveraged with other funds, and with other partners, to allow for effective and efficient collaborative efforts to address their plan priorities. States expressed that the ongoing effectiveness of their state programs requires the continued flexibility to allocate prevention, control, management and educational efforts toward their most problematic species and favored broader discretion than envisioned under the FY2012 proposal. States were very appreciative that their concerns were considered and that state plan funding for FY2012 will again be equally distributed among states submitting grant proposals.

AFWA prepared FY2013 appropriations recommendations for all federal agencies with programs related to fish and wildlife management to submit to Congress. Funding for invasive species were identified and requested for the US Fish and Wildlife Service (state ANS plans, Asian carp prevention, Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act) and US Geological Survey (Asian carp prevention).

The Invasive Species Committee submitted a National Conservation Need (NCN) for the 2013 Multistate Conservation Grant Program. The NCN was similar to the one submitted for 2012 and focused on coordination to improve, develop, and/or implement Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) and containment methods so state and federal agencies can more effectively manage invasive species. The NCN was ranked 6<sup>th</sup> by the National Grants Committee and was not selected to be eligible for funding.

Invasive Species Committee staff and members participated in the 2012 National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) and assisted on the planning committee.